causing the data processing apparatus to operate as an

apparatus comprising:

producing an image output job;

designating a first selection condition data by a

user;

[obtain means for obtaining output form of an

image]; and

selection means for selecting an image output

apparatus[,] which can perform output operation in accordance

with a content of said image output job and said first

selection condition data [the output form obtained by said

obtain means], from the plurality of image output apparatuses

connected by said connection means.

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in

light of the Office Action dated March 28, 2000. Claims 1, 3

to 16 and 18 to 35 are in the application, with Claims 1, 3,

4, 7, 9 to 14, 16, 18, 19, 22 and 24 to 35 having been

amended, and with Claims 2 and 17 having been cancelled.

Claims 1, 16 and 30 to 35 are the independent claims herein.

Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully

requested.

Claims 1 to 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over U.S. Patent No. 5,625,757 (Kageyama). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention is generally directed to an image producing apparatus which selects from one of several connected printers to print a print job based on the output form of the image to be printed and based on a first selection condition designated by the user of the apparatus.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 defines a data processing apparatus having connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses. The apparatus includes producing means for producing an image output job, designating means for designating a first selection condition data by a user, and selection means for selecting an image output apparatus, which can perform output operation in accordance with a content of the image output job and the selection condition data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by the connection means. The apparatus also includes job assigning means for assigning an image output job to the image output apparatus selected by the selection means.

The applied art, namely Kageyama, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing features of amended

independent Claim 1. Specifically, Kageyama is not seen to disclose or to suggest designating means for designating a first selection condition data by a user and a selection means for selecting an image output apparatus, which can perform output operation in accordance with a content of the image output job and the selection condition data.

Kageyama is seen to be directed to a printing system having a distributed printing management server. Kageyama, abstract; and column 4, lines 11 to 25. Specifically, Kageyama is seen to describe a printing system in which the client indicates logical print specifications, such as double-sided printing, and the print server selects printers which are adequate for the indicated logical specifications whereupon the client selects an appropriate printer. Kageyama, Figure 3; column 9, lines 47 to 65; and column 16, lines 54 to 67. However, Kageyama is not seen to disclose or to suggest selection means for selecting an image output apparatus, which can perform output operation in accordance with a content of the image output job and the selection condition data. Specifically, Kageyama is not seen to base its selection of a printer on the content of the image output job to be printed. Instead, Kageyama is seen to rely only upon logical print specifications which are

indicated by the client in order to make such a selection. Kageyama, column 16, lines 56 to 64.

Although Kageyama is seen to collect information from the user regarding the form of the image print job to be printed, Kageyama is not seen to collect this information from the user until after the selection of the printer has already been made, at which time the printer is designated as a decided printer. Kageyama, column 24, lines 34 to 52. Accordingly, the present invention provides the beneficial result that a user does not need to have pre-existing knowledge of the capabilities of the connected printers and does not have to instruct form information of the image output job to be printed because the content of the image output job is used by the selection means for selecting an appropriate image output apparatus.

Accordingly, amended independent Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. In addition, amended independent Claim 16 is directed to a method claim which substantially corresponds to the apparatus claim of amended independent Claim 1; amended independent Claim 32 is directed to a memory medium claim substantially corresponding to the apparatus claim of amended independent Claim 1; and amended independent Claim 33 is directed to a program claim substantially

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corresponding to the apparatus claim of amended independent Claim 1. Accordingly, amended independent Claims 16, 32 and 33 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 1.

Amended independent Claim 30 defines a data processing apparatus having connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses. The apparatus includes producing means for producing an image output job, designating means for designating a first selection condition data by a user, and selection means for selecting an image output apparatus which can perform output operation in accordance with a content of the image output job and the first selection condition data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by the connection means.

The applied art, namely Kageyama, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing features of amended independent Claim 30. Specifically, Kageyama is not seen to disclose or to suggest designating means for designating a first selection condition by a user and selection means for selecting an image data output apparatus which can perform output operation in accordance with a content of the image output job and the first selection condition data.

As discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 1, Kageyama is seen to base its selection of a printer on logical print specifications which are provided by the client, and is not seen to select an appropriate printer in accordance with the content of the image output job to be printed and the first selection condition data designated by the user. Kageyama, Figure 3; column 16, lines 54 to 67; and column 17, lines 1 to 8. In addition, Kageyama is not seen to collect and to utilize information regarding the form of the print job to be printed until after a printer has already been selected and designated as a decided printer. Kageyama, column 24, lines 36 to 52.

Accordingly, amended independent Claim 30 is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. In addition, amended independent Claim 31 is directed to a method claim which substantially corresponds to the apparatus claim of amended independent Claim 30; amended independent Claim 34 is directed to a memory medium claim substantially corresponding to the apparatus claim of amended independent Claim 30; and amended independent Claim 35 is directed to a program claim substantially corresponding to the apparatus claim of amended independent Claim 30. Accordingly, amended independent

Claims 31, 34 and 35 are believed to be allowable for the same reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 30.

The remaining art of record has been reviewed and is not seen to add anything that would remedy the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All

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Respectfully submitted,

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